

RENRI-NO EDA 連理の枝

INTERTWINING BRANCHES

A biological epic sure to leave you in tears!

WHAT

IS TRUE
LOVE?





I NEVER CARED
WHETHER THINGS
LIKE FATE OR DESTINY
EXISTED, UNTIL
THAT DAY

Shimokawa
Saki



下川
咲

連理の枝

RENRI
NO EDA





YOU SHOULD
FEEL THE SUN
ON YOUR SKIN.
IT'S GREAT.





SHAKE SHAKE

COME ON, KEI-CHAN. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SAID,

"THE AIR'S SO MUCH CLEANER IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE," AND

"I CAN DO ALL MY WEB DESIGN WORK FROM HOME ANYWAY, SO I MIGHT AS WELL LIVE SOMEWHERE NICE AND QUIET."













TOLD ME IT
WAS JUST A
SUPPLEMENT OR
SOMETHING.

BUT I CAN'T
TRUST THAT
GUY.

HE'S
SENILE.

HE GAVE ME A
SHOT THAT TIME
I WENT WITH YOU
TO SEE HIM.



HE'S THE ONLY
DOCTOR IN THE
VILLAGE.

YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO WENT
AHEAD AND BOUGHT
THE HOUSE.

WELL, WHO ELSE ARE WE
SUPPOSED
GO TO?



I TOLD
YOU I'D BE
FINE BY
MYSELF.

I NEVER
ASKED YOU
TO COME.

UH.



MIZUKI,

I KNOW A
KID LIKE YOU
MIGHT THINK
THIS IS JUST
SOME BORING
OLD DUMP
OUT IN THE
COUNTRYSIDE.

BUT THE GOVERN-
MENT'S
TRYING TO
ENCOURAGE
PEOPLE
TO SETTLE
HERE.

YOU WOULDN'T
BELIEVE THE
GOVERNMENT
BENEFITS I
GET JUST BY
LIVING HERE.





TOO
MANY
THINGS
TO DO.

I HAVE
TO GET
OUT THE
FURNACE.

THEN
GET THE
FIREWOOD
READY.



AND I DOUBT
I'LL GET IT ALL
DONE BEFORE
IT STARTS
SNOWING.



IT SURE
IS COLD
TODAY.

I'LL
HAVE TO
CHANGE
THE TIRES

IF IT
SNOWS.



I THINK
WE'LL BE FINE
FOR NOW.





WHY DON'T WE SHAGGLE UP UNDER A NICE WARM BLANKET

AND WATCH A REALLY GREAT MOVIE



INSTEAD OF STARING AT A SCREEN ALL DAY?!

WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING FUN



I JUST HAD A WONDERFUL IDEA

YOU SHOULD TAKE A BREAK IF YOU'RE STUCK SOMEWHERE



COME ON, IT'S A GREAT MOVIE!

I LOVE THE LAST SCENE

WHERE THE TWO MAIN CHARACTERS ARE DRIVING ON THAT LONG, STRAIGHT HIGHWAY TOWARD ALL THE WAY INTO THE DISTANCE, AND SUDDENLAY THEY DISAPPEAR INTO THE HORIZON.

I COULD WATCH IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND STILL LOVE IT.

I KNOW EXACTLY THE ONE YOU'D PICK.

AND IT SORES ME TO DEATH.



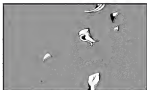
YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT?

I PITY YOU, RED-CHAIR, I REALLY DO SOME JUST DON'T GET THAT CHARM.

THAT'S WHY YOU'LL NEVER GET MARRIED

ONCE IS ENOUGH FOR ME.







What is that?



What's happening to her?







How can you still smile?



IT'S NOT
JUST ON THE
SURFACE,
EITHER.

THAT
A PLANT IS
GERMINATING
INSIDE HER.

BUT I
CAN SAY
WITHOUT
A DOUBT



I KNOW THIS
MAY BE HARD
TO ACCEPT,













The number of
drugs they gave
Mizuki increased
with each passing
day.



even though
she knows
we'll never
go on that
picnic.

She's saying
that just to
cheer me up.

ISN'T IT
BEAUTIFUL?

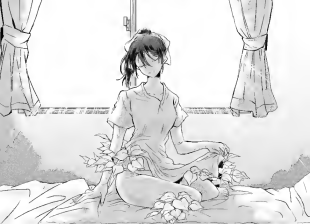
THE LEAVES
TURN A LITTLE
TRANSPARENT
AND SHINE
UNDER THE
SUNLIGHT.

IT'S
NOT ALL
BAD.

COME
ON, STOP
LOOKING
LIKE THAT.

Is it beautiful?

It's killing her.



IT'LL BE
EVEN MORE
BEAUTIFUL.

ONCE THE
FLOWERS
BLOOM,



...Is it beautiful to her?

but still
she never
cried.



She was
always a
fearful
her.





...PHOTO-
SYNTHESIS...



THE PLANT
INSIDE
MIZUKI'S
BODY

BEGINS TO
GROW WHEN
IT DETECTS
SUNLIGHT.



OUR ONLY
OPTION IS TO
CUT HER OFF
FROM SUNLIGHT
COMPLETELY.

WE'LL BE
MOVING HER
UNDERGROUND
SOON.

Mizuki's body
was almost
like an actual
plant.

as it ate
away at
her body.



It was
staggering
how fast
it grew.



HEY,
KEI-CHAN.

MIZU-



SOON YOU
WOON'T EVEN
BE ABLE TO
FEEL THE
SUNLIGHT

ON
YOUR
SKIN.



BECOMING
AN ACTUAL
TREE.

HOW DO
YOU THINK
I'D BE
HAPPIEST

OR GOING
ON LIKE
THIS?



THEN I
GUESS

...I
SEE.



YOU HAVE
TO KEEP
GOING

YOU
HAVE
TO.

...DON'T
THINK
LIKE
THAT.



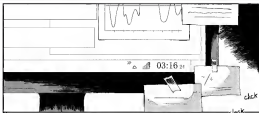
—— Mizuki,



WE WON'T
BE GOING

ON THAT
PICNIC.

your heart is
beginning to wither.



"How do you
think I'd be
happier?"





"You have to keep going."

"You have to."

think-
ing of
myself.

I'm
only

No.



MAYBE
I'LL BRING
SOME
TEA.



I CAN'T THINK
ANYMORE

ARE
YOU STUCK
SOMEWHERE
AGAIN?





What can I do

to make you happy?











DON'T
SAY THAT.

YOU
KNOW I
CAN'T—



WITH THIS
HAPPENING
TO ME?

...I'VE
BEEN
THINK-
ING.

DID IT
EVER CROSS
YOUR MIND
HOW I
FELT.

GET-
TING
FLOW-
ERS



CRASH





We weren't
Right,
Miku?



We
weren't
stran-
gers.

went
deeper
than
that.



You're
wrong.

What
we had



COMING
ANYMORE.

DON'T
BOTHER

KEL-
CHAN.





the
fragrance of
their leaves
struck me



As I
searched
my way
between
the wither-
ing trees





HOW DOES IT
FEEL?

I'M SURE
YOU'RE USED
TO GETTING
SHOTS BY
NOW.



IT'LL BE
OVER IN A
SECOND.

ALRIGHT.



NO, DR.
WADA.

SHUN
AND I BOTH
FEEL FINE.



NOTHING
OUT OF THE
ORDINARY?

YUJI.

HOW HAVE
YOU BEEN
FEELING?



NOW, HOW
INDEED
SHOULD WE
GO ABOUT

PREVENT-
ING THE
EXTINCTION
OF THE
HUMAN
RACE?

WITH OUR
EXPANDING
HUMAN
POPULA-
TION,

MASS
FAMINE
IS THE ONE
AND ONLY
END ALMOS-
TING US.



AN ENER-
GY-NEEDED
BODY...

THE
SOLUTION IS
A BODY ABLE
TO SURVIVE
WITH CLOSE
TO NO SUS-
TAINANCE.



PLANTS HAVE
THE ABILITY TO
USE THE SUN'S
ENERGY TO CON-
VERT CARBON
DIOXIDE AND
WATER INTO
SUGARS.

THEY
CAN USE
AS NUTRI-
ENTS.

THEY CAN
SURVIVE
NEARLY
ANYWHERE
ON EARTH



THAT
ABILITY



IS THE
KEY

TO
HUMANITY'S
CONTINUED
SURVIVAL.



ELIMINATING
THE PROBLEM OF
MASS STARVATION
ALTOGETHER.

WE WILL
BE ABLE TO
CREATE OUR OWN
SUSTENANCE
THROUGH PHO-
TOSYNTHESIS.

ONCE I
SUCCEEDED IN
THE FUSION OF
HUMAN AND
PLANT CELLS.



THE
ADULT
BODY'S
AFFINITY
WITH THE
PLANT CELLS
SEEMS
WEAK.

BUT I
BELIEVE ONCE
WE HAVE THE
TECHNOLOGY, WE
OUGHT TO ATTEMPT
CELLULAR ASSIMI-
LATION TRIALS
ON FETUSES.

...OF
COURSE NOT,
HOW COULD I
OVERLOOK
VALUABLE
DATA?

...AREN'T YOU
OVERLOOKING
THE FACT THAT
THE PLANT CELLS
IN HER BODY
ARE DIVING
OUT OF
CONTROL?



THIS IS FOR
THE GREATER
GOOD OF
HUMANITY.

FAIL-
URES,

AND THE OCCA-
SIONAL SACRI-
FICE.

ARE THE PRICE WE
PAY.

WHY DO
YOU STILL
TRY TO GO
AGAINST THE
WILL OF THE
GOVERNMENT?

TELL
ME.

...THIS ISN'T
THE TIME FOR
SENTIMENT.



THE DIE
IS CAST.



KEI-
CHAN...?



...KEI-
CHAN?



WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
NOW? IT'S
BEEN THREE
DAYS SINCE
THE LAST TIME
YOU CAME.

I FIGURED...
YOU WOULDN'T
BE COMING
ANYMORE,
THOUGH.

















IT'S BEEN
SO LONG
SINCE I'VE
GOTTEN SOME
FRESH AIR

ISN'T DRIVING
AT NIGHT SO
BEAUTIFUL?

THE SUN'S
COMING
UP SOON,
THOUGH

HEY, DON'T
LEAN TOO
FAR OUT



ARE
YOU
SURE

TAKING ME
OUT OF THE
HOSPITAL
WAS A GOOD
IDEA?

WOULDN'T
THEY BE
MAD AT
US?

DO YOU
WANT TO
GO BACK,
THEN?



THEN WHO
CARES WHAT
THEY THINK?

NO
WAY!







"GOING ALL
THE WAY
INTO THE
DISTANCE."

"A LONG,
STRAIGHT
HIGHWAY"



AND TAKING
YOU HERE WAS
THE ONLY THING
I COULD THINK
OF...

I THOUGHT
ABOUT WHAT
TO DO FOR
HOURS,

I NEVER
UNDERSTOOD
YOU, BUT I DIDN'T
THINK I KNEW SO
LITTLE ABOUT
YOU.



DON'T
WORRY,



I'M
SORRY
THIS IS
THE BEST
I COULD
DO

NEXT TIME,
I'LL THINK
THE PLAN
THROUGH
BETTER~

I KNOW IT'S NOT
THE SAME AS THE
MOVIE. IT'S NOT
EVEN A HIGHWAY,
JUST AN OLD ROAD
THAT WAS NEVER
FINISHED



.....



THIS IS
ENOUGH
FOR ME.

THANK
YOU

I'M THE
HAPPIEST
GIRL IN THE
WORLD NOW.



KEL-
CHAN,

SOMETIMES,

I WON-
DER...

EVERY ONCE
IN A WHILE.



HAD
NEVER MET
THAT DAY?

THE TWO
OF US

WHAT IF





IF YOU
TURN BACK
NOW.

HEY,
KEI-CHAN.

THERE'S
STILL TIME
FOR YOU.



YOU'VE
ALWAYS BEEN
A TERRIBLE
LIAR.

I'LL GIVE
YOUR WORDS
RIGHT BACK
TO YOU.



JUST LET
ME BE
SELFISH
THIS ONE
LAST TIME.

I WANT
YOU TO LIVE,
KEI-CHAN.

THIS IS
ENOUGH
FOR ME.

THANK
YOU.

HEY,

GO BACK
TO THE
HOSPITAL.

THEY'LL
TREAT
YOU.



MIZUKI.



HAVE YOU
HEARD OF A
STORY CALLED
"INTERWEAVING
BRANCHES"?

IT'S AN
OLD CHINESE
FOLKTALE.



THAT IN
THE END

THEY GREW
SO TIGHTLY
TOGETHER,
AND THEIR
BRANCHES
BECAME SO
ENTANGLED,

ONCE,
THERE WERE
TWO TREES
GROWING
SIDE BY
SIDE

WHOSE
BRANCHES
STARTED
GROWING
INTO ONE
ANOTHER



THEY
BECAME
ONE TREE.

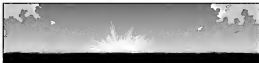


NO
MATTER
WHAT.

MIZUKI,

I'LL
ALWAYS BE
WITH YOU.















ding
dong







REMS NO BOM

連理の枝



FIN

ONE AT LAST.

RENRI NO EDA

TRANSLATION NOTE

The folktale *Kei tells Mizuko is* from a compilation of supernatural legends called *Soushim Ji* or "In Search of the Supernatural." The story is of a minister named Han Ping, who served the state of Song in its last years during the Warring States period, and his wife, whose maiden name was Ite. The Song king coveted Han Ping's wife for her great beauty and took her for himself, sentencing Han Ping to hard labor so that they would never meet again. The two began sending cryptic letters to each other, ostensibly discussing the weather, but in reality planning their suicide, which they carried out shortly thereafter. In her will, Han Ping's wife requested that they be buried beside each other so that they could be together in death as they couldn't in life. Enraged, the king ordered their ashes buried apart and declared that if they could yet somehow find a way to be with one another, he would do nothing more to stop them. Within a few days two trees sprang forth from their graves and began growing towards each other, their branches becoming inseparably intertwined, and a pair of birds then built their nest on the trees' branches and sang day and night.

This tale would later become the inspiration for the closing lines of a poem called *Chang hen ge* or "The Song of Everlasting Regret", which is a retelling of the romance of a Tang emperor and his concubine, tragically cut short by her death at the hands of rebels. The poem was immensely popular, influencing works ranging from the *Tale of Genji* to Cantonese operas. The phrase "renri no eda" or "intertwining branches" is taken from the final passage of poem, in the which the emperor reminisces about the vows he and the concubine made to each other before her death.

"In the sky, let us be two birds, soaring wing to wing,
And on the earth, let us be two branches of a tree, inseparably intertwined."



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